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October 24, 2000

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U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Dockets Management Branch
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20785

Re: Docket # 98P-0151/CP1

This letter is to urge the FDA to grant the petition to prohibit the slaughter of downed animals. This legislation is important for several reasons.

First, I feel very strongly that animals that are too sick or injured to stand should never be allowed to enter the human food chain, which poses an unnecessary health risk. In addition to the bacterial contamination associated with downed animals, there is evidence that some downed animals may be afflicted with a form of BSE ("Mad Cow Disease"), which has been linked to the fatal human illness variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease. Recently, *The New York Times* reported that British health officials fear that an estimated 500,000 Britons could die over the next 30 years from this disease, which is contracted by eating infected beef products and is always fatal (July 25, 2000). This epidemic can occur in the United States, so we must take every precaution to prevent it.

Would you want to consume animal products that have been produced from these diseased and injured animals? Food products from downed animals especially need to be eliminated from the National School Lunch Program and other federal food and nutrition programs in order to better protect our children, the poor, the ill, and the elderly who are more likely to consume these products and who, additionally, need the best, not substandard, nutrition that can be provided.

Second, please keep in mind that downed animals comprise a very small percentage of animals slaughtered, and by prohibiting their marketing will cause no undue economic hardship to their owners.

In addition, the number of downed animals can be drastically reduced (by up to 90% according to industry experts) by providing better care for and handling of these animals. It would behoove the livestock industry to prevent downed animals in the first place, and the prohibition of the sale of downed animals will provide an incentive for the industry to do so.

Please consider these reasons to grant the petition. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



98P-0151

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